the perceptive faculty is compelled to make a perception out of this alone. What could it do? How could it render it intelligible? If I had already had a perception made out of real sensations and were merely closing my eyes and ears to everything transmitted through them, I could recall the sensations just experienced and by means of my memory complete a true and full perception of what was suggested by the single real sensation. The action would be very similar to that posited as taking place in dreams, with the difference that here I consciously recall and rehabilitate at the suggestion of the single sensation all the rest. Thus I get my perception, blind, it is true, in that with the exception of feeling, all the other sensations are merely invented, artificial or imaginary, yet nevertheless intelligible, a copy of the actual perception which by an act of conscious will I have made impossible by closing my eyes and ears to the other sensations of which it was composed.

MISCELLANEOUS.

REGARDING CHRISTIAN ORIGINS.

BY EDGAR A. JOSSELYN.

A number of interesting articles have appeared in *The Open Court* on the origin of Christianity, about which there seems to be a rapidly growing interest among students of the history of religion. So much new information has been recently published about the early centuries of our era, that we are obliged to revise our idea of them, and give more serious attention to the "Christ myth" claim. Your contributors, however, while advancing strong arguments against various theories, do not appear to give consideration to two very important phases in the question, the combination of politics and religion in the early Roman Empire, and the strong hold that the dramatic elements of the ancient Greek mysteries had upon the people. Other writers ignore the same points, especially the first. Both points strengthen the Christ myth theory.

At the beginning of the Christian era the Roman emperors were deified and an acceptance of this deification was forced upon the empire. Apparently a unified religion was sought, corresponding to the unified political world that had been achieved. There was not such entire tolerance as Gibbon represents. To those who would not accept the deification of the emperors there was intolerance. The Jews resisted. We know that Philo of Alexandria went to Rome in 40 A. D. to persuade the emperor Gaius to abstain from claiming divine honor of the Jews. A Jewish religious revolt arose that ultimately led to the destruction of the Temple in 70 A. D. As is usual with religious wars the offense was not so much a difference in belief as resistance to the estab-

lished government, either Church or State. It is evident that it was considered desirable to have a uniform religion in the empire, and this idea is found outside as well as inside governmental circles. Philosophy and religion were deeply discussed, especially at Alexandria. We are told that "in the first centuries of Christianity, the religion of Persia was more studied and less understood than it had ever been before. The real object aimed at, in studying the old religion, was to form a new one." Christianity ultimately became a fusion of many elements, without any really new ethics, without any wholly new dogmas, but with one supreme feature, entirely new to the Roman world, a unified, established, intolerant, ruling Church, reproducing on a large scale what had existed in earlier times among the Egyptians, Jews, and other Orientals. The fusion is well described in Dr. Carus's *Pleroma* and Gilbert Sadler's *Origin and Meaning of Christianity*. The dogmas were principally Greek. Ethics, as of old (especially as in China), came from the "Mount." The Church establishment as a form of government was essentially Roman. Monotheism, or at least a modified monotheism, was of course adopted, as consistent with the aims and ideals of the movement. It should be noted that where other governing religions have been forcibly imposed on peoples, they have been monotheisms, as in the case of the Egyptian Aten, fourteen centuries before Christ, Judaism, and Mohammedanism. The fact that the new growth was largely outside of government circles might explain the persecutions. But Christianity was not alone in the race for supremacy. Mithraism made a mighty effort for control and nearly succeeded, but was overthrown and absorbed by Christianity which adopted its observance of Sunday and Christmas.

The second phase of the question, that of the influence of the Greek religious drama, presents an entirely different side of the subject. Most writers agree that Christianity is a Greek religion. The resurrection myth, appearing as the Osiris myth in Egypt, that of Attis, Adonis, and Mithra in various parts of western Asia, and as that of Dionysos and others in Greece, seems to be as old as mankind, and to represent one of the foundation stones of religion. Moreover its appeal was to the community rather than the individual, was intuitional rather than intellectual in character, and was essentially dramatic. Jane Harrison, in her *Ancient Art and Ritual*, shows that art, especially drama, was derived from ritual. She also points out that it was a democrat, Peisistratos, who revived and favored the ancient ritual in the sixth century B. C. Both Miss Harrison and Gilbert Murray trace the development of Greek religion from the ancient Cyprian and Greek myths to the anthropomorphic Olympian gods, after which came the academic philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, which doubtless did not appeal to the people. Meanwhile in the centuries just before the Christian era the cult of Osiris was revived in Egypt, and we know that Egyptian influence, especially in art, spread through the Greek world after Alexander's conquests. Gerald Massey in *Ancient Egypt the Light of the World* provides an Egyptian origin for nearly every Christian dogma. Now the essence of the Osiris and similar myths,—the resurrection or rebirth,—reflected the spirit of the times. The Roman Empire itself represented a birth of a new western world. There was a great drama taking place before the eyes of the people in the unfolding of a new era. It is also true that civilization was breaking down as well as starting on a new road, and a reversion of thought to primitive type would be natural. The masses

could easily welcome a new cult imposed on terms which gave them back the old myth that they instinctively loved. Meanwhile in the centuries since the old religion was most revered in Greece, there had come a change in man's attitude toward mankind. Man was now the measure of all things. The gods had already been made man-like, now man was to be god-like. The new mystery drama was to be in terms of men, not bulls and rams. However, the individual was still to be reborn by rites of initiation,—not of the mysteries, but of baptism, the ceremony that counted so much in earliest Christianity. It was no salvation on easy terms or any terms that the Greek world was seeking, but the old rebirth in new terms. In the Eucharist is found the same dramatic idea derived from other sources. In the ceremony of the mass the ancient mystery drama was re-enacted in a new guise.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

THE BOOK OF THE KINDRED SAYINGS (Sanyutta-Nikaya): Part I (Sagatha-Vagga). Translated by *Mrs. Rhys Davids,* assisted by *Suriyagoda Sumangala Thera.* London: The Oxford University Press [1917]. Pp. xvi, 321. Price, cloth, 10s. net.

This translation, published for the Pali Text Society, contains the first eleven books of the "Classified Collection" (*Sanyutta Nikaya*) of the "Dialogues" (*Sutta Pitaka*), the second group of the canonical texts of early Buddhism. The text followed is of course that of the Pali edition published by Léon Feer, 1884ff, of which we now have the first volume in English. There seems to be hope that the rest of these suttas will appear shortly. As we learn from the Preface, the volume before us was finished as early as July, 1916, but war prices of paper and printing threatened to delay the publication quite indefinitely. Then it was decided to proceed with the work regardless of financial considerations, a course for which the Society certainly deserves much credit. The second volume is announced as following closely behind.

Of these eleven books, the *Sagatha Vagga,* or section "with verses" as they are called, up to now only two were available to Western students in complete translations, the "Mara Suttas" and the "Suttas of Sisters," of which Professor Windisch gave a German version in his *Mara und Buddha,* Leipsic, 1895. Besides, the "Suttas of Sisters" were rendered into English by Mrs. Rhys Davids before, in her *Psalms of the Early Buddhists,* Part I (1909), Appendix. Of quotations of course there are many in books dealing with early Buddhism, having on the whole the effect of making the darkness covering other parts only more visible. So we are glad to see at last the *Sagatha Vagga* made accessible in its entirety also to others than Pali scholars.

The impression the book creates as a whole is well summarized by the translator in the following (p. vii):

"Mythical and folk-lore drapery are wrapped about many of the sayings here ascribed to the Buddha. And in nearly all of them, if any represent genuine prose utterances, they have become deflected in the prism of memorializing verse, and to that extent artificial. Nevertheless, the matter of them is of the stamp of the oldest doctrine known to us, and from them a fairly com-